

Ridgefield Library Board Meeting
November 27, 2017

Present: Amanda Bergen; Michele Booth; Lynn Consentino (on call); Steve DeMatteo, Secretary; Rob Ellis; Magda Fincham; Tom Gerhard; Alison Greeley; Tizzie Mantione; Dean Miller, Chair; Gary Rapp, Treasurer; Jeroen van Beek; David Yaun

Others present: Brenda McKinley, Library Director; Lauren Bubniak, Director of Development; Karen Kazzi, Inter-Library Loan Clerk; Julie Yaun, Friends of the Ridgefield Library

Excused: Matt Byrnes, Vice-Chair; Rob Freeman; Woody Harford

Call to Order

Board Chair Dean Miller called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM in the Dayton Program Room.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 23, 2017 Library Board meeting were approved with corrections.

Chairman's Announcements

Dean Miller thanked the Board and the Development team, in particular, for all the events and activities that have been happened. The Wild Game Dinner, Camp Snooze, the Guardian Society Kick-off were all successful events. Thanks to all who took time over the Thanksgiving weekend to promote Library Days at Books on the Common. Board members reported that they had many conversations with shoppers. Lauren reported that Ellen Burns was very happy with the traffic and how the event went. Dean also made a call for 100% Board participation in the Annual Appeal.

Director's Report

Brenda McKinley's report was sent in the Board Packet. Brenda highlighted the Library support of the Town Social Services, RVNA & Western CT Area Agency on Aging provision of Medicare counseling in the Donofrio Technology Center. Brenda also reported on the supplemental delivery service for Inter-Library Loan which is being pursued by the Bibliomation Consortium in cooperation with the two other big library consortia in the state and administered by the CT Library Consortium.

Staff Spotlight

Karen Kazzi, Inter-Library Loan Clerk was the November Staff Spotlight. Karen started at as a Shelver here at the Library 34 years ago. She has been doing inter library loans for over 20 years. Karen supports 26 different book groups, including the 12 that happen here at the Library and the off-site Library-run group at Founder's Hall. Of the 1300 items ordered this year, 107 were from out-of-state. A special loan project is happening with Barlow Mountain Elementary School to support an educational unit on weather. Karen highlighted a few special interactions she has had with patrons, and how meaningful this service is to those who need it. Discussion continued on the strain the reduced delivery service from the state is having and how Karen is managing to get our patrons what they need.

Friends Update

Julie Yaun reported that the Friends Fall Book Sale earned just over \$18,000. Internet sales continue at a good pace, with October being the highest on record with over \$7,800 in gross sales. RHS Juniors, Grant Yaun and Ian Calle, are continuing their project of sending books to active duty military personnel. They chose around 900 books and DVDs during the post-sale nonprofit days and shipped over 7 boxes using the \$300 collected during the sale for that purpose. The Friends make every effort to donate the unsold books to nonprofits after each sale. They distributed 5,800 books during nonprofits day (and added evening) this year. The Friends also wrapped around 300 books to be given at holiday parties for residents of Ballard Green and Prospect Ridge as well as at the holiday party held at the Lounsbury House. They also gave 800 books to Keeler Tavern for their holiday luncheons. The Friends hosted the second annual Board-Friends Mixer, allowing members of both boards to get to know each other a little better. The Friends Holiday party will be on December 4th at Piccolo Pizza.

Finance Committee

Gary Rapp reported on the current Operating Budget, we are about \$13K ahead overall and in good standing. We will do a deeper projection review in mid-January to see how challenges in budget are being managed. Drafting of the FY19 budget has begun. Gary will be meeting with Brenda and Kathy Maher this week. Gary will call a special meeting to review proposed budget prior to the 12/18 Board meeting, when action on the budget is needed to stay on the town's submission timeline.

Gary reported on the development of a Capital spending plan in the areas of building and technology. He, Dean and Brenda will be meeting with Town Finance Director, Kevin Redmond, to clarify the Town's Capital submission guidelines. The goal is that the Library be part of this Town-wide process so that capital projects which will be coming up as the building and technology ages can be addressed. During the campaign and construction, the Library did not have these needs but advance planning must be put in place so that the Library is back in this process.

Gary also reported on the Finance Committee's decision, after much research and consideration, to consolidate the Library's investments with UBS. Related to this is the Finance Committee's development of a debt reduction plan to address the outstanding construction soft cost debt. The investment consolidation will provide better terms on the debt and will also provide an opportunity for a one time catch-up payment of \$270K which will be made and will not affect the budget draw. The Finance Committee's plan includes quarterly assessments of investments as well as each investment sale to determine when further debt reduction is prudent.

Development

Rob Ellis and Laureen Bubniak shared the Development thermometer which showed efforts are slightly ahead of last year. The Annual Appeal is off to a good start although that can change daily. They reported the exciting news of confirmation of a Title Sponsor for this year's Gala. Chef's Warehouse will be the Title Sponsor, John Couri is on their Board. Laureen will be starting the Escape Room promotions, there are currently 32 sessions for purchasing, some presented as an escape experience that individuals can buy tickets for and some as "team building" experiences with the purchase of the entire session. The staff are excited to be making this happen and contributing to the development efforts. Laureen also reported on a new

fundraising activity, cooking demo session done at Nature's Temptation, which will include appetizers, wine, and the food being prepared by Chef Liz Gagnon. Participants will leave with recipes and ingredients to make the food being prepared at the event.

Technology Committee

Tom Gerhard and Brenda reported that the proposal contract with Miranda Creative has been signed and initial payment made. The kick-off meeting with the staff and Miranda is scheduled for December 8th. We do not have a launch date.

Strategic Planning

Alison Greeley reported that the Strategic Planning Committee is meeting bi-weekly. We will be working with the Aspen Institute Report and Action Plan for developing the strategic plan. On parallel tracks, the committee has identified community leaders representing different town demographics for outreach efforts, Mary Rindfleisch and Brenda will be gathering staff and Friends input, Alison will be gathering Board member input. In that vein, Board members were given the Aspen SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) Analysis to consider and complete for the December Board meeting. Dean Miller and Brenda began community outreach by meeting with Rudy Marconi to gather his input on both the process and Ridgefield's challenges. The planned timeline is to gather feedback by the end of January, compile and evaluate in February and the revisit what this means for the strategic framework in March.

Community Pulse – Heard Around Town

Issues brought up at the meeting were the Library's support of the family who experienced the devastating house fire and the conversations around town surrounding the discovery of anti-Semitic symbols at the high school. Brenda will share this with the staff. As a start, the Library will be very inclusive in holiday season displays and décor.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda McKinley
Library Director